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A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING DISADVANTAGED YOUTH.

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THE EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION IN POPULATION, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND TECHNOLOGY ON VARIOUS GROUPS, SUCH AS ADOLESCENTS, THE LOWER CLASSES, AND MINORITY GROUPS, ARE DISCUSSED. THE TOTAL EFFECT OF THIS REVOLUTION HAS BEEN TO DRIVE THE AMERICAN SOCIETY APART, FORCING IT TO MANIFEST ITSELF IN LOCAL SUBCULTURES WHICH ARE FORMED BY THE PROBLEM-SOLVING TENDENCY OF HUMAN GROUPS WHEN CONFRONTED WITH SPECIFIC AND RECURRENT PROBLEMS. INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED, MUST BE EVALUATED IN TERMS OF THE VALUES, ATTITUDES, AND PERSPECTIVES OF THEIR SUBCULTURE. THE SCHOOL HAS AN OBLIGATION TO ADJUST ITS GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY IN RELATION TO THE NEEDS OF THE GROUP IT IS SERVING, RATHER THAN TO IMPOSE THE SAME VALUES AND ATTITUDES UPON ALL GROUPS. REASONS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THE "WAR ON POVERTY" IN AN AFFLUENT SOCIETY AND OBSERVATIONS OF WHY IT IS PARTIALLY UNSUCCESSFUL ARE GIVEN. (PS)

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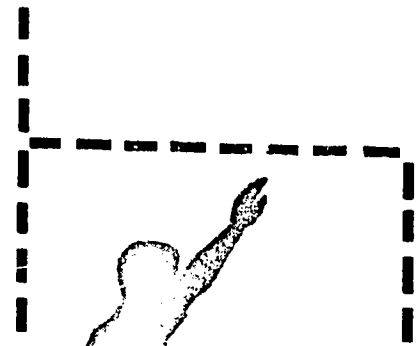
Strengthening Counseling Services for Disadvantaged Youth



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A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

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All of us here are aware that disadvantaged and alienated youth represent a special problem within our student population, and I am gratified to know that professional educational counselors are concerned with discovering the perspective and point of view most useful in relating to it. In my opinion, the problem is not external, not imposed from outside; rather, it is derived from the structure of our own relationship to the world. In this point there are very important implications for the changing social scene.

If others pose a problem for us, it is not so much our view of them that needs to be brought into question; we must question our own attitude, our own view, in order to engage effectively. It is the problem of "view" that I wish to discuss this morning.

Our present structures and organizations do not permit us, for the most part, to cope with the problems that confront us in the terms appropriate to them. Our professional obligations, the institutions of which we are a part, our traditional routines and procedures have molded and shaped us, and they are the basis of our engagement to a large extent. They have forced us to ignore the need for a new way of perception. As a criminologist, I have perhaps had a more dramatic experience with the problem than you have had as educators. When dealing with marginal youth, the community takes the traditional attitude. The community demands of them penitence, contrition; it demands that marginal youth identify with what is considered proper. Prisons, reformatories, and training schools are so structured as to establish this as a condition of the engagement. Rules and regulations are the context within which the engagement exists. They are considered to be a necessary condition of contact, but quite often there is no contact and no effective communication.

The youngsters whom we counsel and instruct, and to whom we want to relate, use the same language that we employ. But they are not sure that we are not attempting to devour them, and we in turn are not certain what their responses mean. Language does not really offer us a basis for the solution to our problems. In many respects, we are unwittingly a party to considerations which so structure our relationships that the eventual outcome may be far different from what we had anticipated or wanted.

Some profound changes of revolutionary proportions are taking place in American society. From the standpoint of society, it seems to me that they are responsible for structuring the relations of certain individuals to us in the same way that our administrative organizations structure our relations to them. It is important for us to see the problem as it is posed in its context. The contemporary American revolution involves three factors: the explosive rate of population increase; the doctrine of civil rights, an ideological force which has

no precedent in recent history; and the impact of technology, which is producing a shape of things for which we have not bargained and which is profoundly affecting many individuals. These tremendous changes are more than facts in themselves--they are the condition for the creation of a new pattern of human relations in this country. We often find it difficult to perceive this new pattern, primarily because our relationships are traditionally structured and we insist upon maintaining the traditional structure.

Let us take a brief look at the influences which, from my point of view, are frightening structures of the community and which, in turn, are creating a whole pattern of subcultures. The subcultures present to us a pattern of adaptive behavior which we tend, for the most part, to treat as a matter of individual expression rather than as a manifestation of collective force. The members of subcultures are a phenomenon of collectivity and they cannot be addressed as though their actions were expressions of individualism. We cannot engage them forcefully because they are under the yoke of a collective coercion to which they are more responsive and which is far more important in their lives than the remote and formal relationships represented by the school, by agencies, by the police, by all the institutions of society. Such agencies and institutions exclude them, deny them, and push them back into behavior on which we pass judgment as though it were a manifestation of individuality rather than a manifestation of collectivity.

The behavioral sciences offer us some propositions and insights into the significance of the revolution which can help us to look at it differently from the way we have looked at it in the past. As a criminologist, I may make some references to crime, but the references will be only for the purpose of illustration. Crime, after all, can be considered as merely a highly dramatic expression of the whole problem--a variation from true north, so to speak, from the central tendencies of society. Crime, a nonconformist expression, is as much a reflection of the patterning of social life as are the conformist expressions of society. In my opinion, crime may be a new type of conformity which we need to recognize as such. Like any other form of behavior, it is in some measure a reflection of the community. In this sense it is important for us to recognize that the problems whose incidence is increasing--e.g., juvenile delinquency and other mass expressions of groups of youngsters--are a projection of deep-seated processes at work in the life of the community. Thus, youngsters who are marginal in school must be regarded not only in relation to the school but also in relation to the collective patterns within the broader society. It is sometimes mistakenly assumed that youngsters who are marginal in school are therefore marginal in society. But do not forget that the society which produces the conformist and conventional middle-class youngster also produces the nonconformist, the deviant or delinquent youngster who is not effectively engaged by the conventional processes of education.

The behavioral sciences also suggest that youngsters who are in some sense deviants or who in some ways do not conform to the norms and standards of society are not to be regarded now as we used to regard them. They are qualitatively different from other youngsters in the social body. They are not persons who are necessarily unable to adjust and who, therefore, must be regarded as individuals with quirks which make it impossible for them to have

effective relations in any kind of social context. Too frequently, we speak about the necessity for "socializing" youngsters, apparently assuming that they are sterile creatures lacking the capacity for living in a state of realistic accommodation with their fellows. The truth is that the research and investigations of the behavioral scientists have made it plain that the people whom we tend to regard as unadjusted are, as a matter of fact, frequently in a remarkable state of adjustment. Such people may indeed be extremely socialized, but their socialization is to group commitments at variance with the norms and standards of other groups in the society. These youngsters are social beings and we must accept this. If they are socialized with reference to particular exotic groups, we must accept this and focus on the terms and conditions of their socialization rather than regard them as persons unable to adjust. The point is that conflict is more frequently a conflict between groups rather than a conflict between individuals and a group. Conflict results today from the emergence of minor pools of collective experience which we are beginning to call subcultures; subcultures, almost by definition, are in opposition to the wider culture.

The emerging subcultures are important, and I wish to discuss them briefly. Negroes, Mexican-Americans, youth in general, live in a world which is apart from the total social world of others. They participate minimally with the rest of the community and thus is created for them a definition of life at odds with the life of the community. Parenthetically, I might add that the same thing is true of old people today. American society today tends to be centrifugal in character; its elements are being forced outward and are forming into smaller groups, each with its own local pool of cultural experience. This is true of young people, of the poverty-stricken, and of members of racial minorities.

Prior to the middle of the twentieth century, American society was centripetal; it was directed to one standard, one norm, one set of values. The European immigrants of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries searched for a way to participate in the society as a whole and to be one with it. They wanted to become acquainted with its customs, arts, skills, and technology. The concept of the "hyphenated" American ignored ethnic origins and emphasized the melting pot process--the transition from what they had been to what they were all to become in the new society. The reverse of this tendency is markedly in evidence at the present time. As I have said before, the revolution in population, civil rights, and technology has had the effect of driving the society apart and forcing it to manifest itself in local pools of experience; i.e., subcultures which create the problem behavior we are all familiar with. Therefore, we must force ourselves to regard people as the behavioral scientists regard them--not intrinsically different but qualitatively the same as others in terms of their physiology, psychology, and biological makeup. Their actions, attitudes, values, and perspectives result from their allegiance to subcultures, not from a fundamental and intrinsic difference.

A point which I want to reemphasize is that the social structure which has produced us and of which we are a part is the same social structure which has produced the people with whom we deal--our clients. The social structure which produces conformity also produces nonconformity. Thus, we must attempt to explore the mystery of the process which causes a society to manifest itself in so many different ways. Our degree of understanding of the differentiated

elements in society becomes greater when we accept the fact that they have been produced by the same social process that has produced the conforming middle class and not by a quite different system.

I also want to point out that our problem youngsters, whatever the nature of their problem, are not isolated objects, unrelated to our treatment of them. The machinery for dealing with their problems is definitional with reference to the problems. A youngster who is singled out for attention is regarded by the community as being somehow different. He has a different attitude toward himself and others view him differently. Dealing with him creates a new set of social relationships, whereas not dealing with him means that he is allied with all others in the common, ongoing processes of society. It is certainly true that there are latent, secret, and as yet undiscovered effects which result from the way in which we address our problems, and the behavioral sciences increasingly are focusing on these side effects which overshadow the influences that have already been identified in particular relationships.

Our attitude toward the atomic bomb serves to illustrate this point. Today we are more preoccupied with fallout than with the destructive power of the bomb, and yet fallout is only an aftermath of the release of atomic energy. At first we did not consider it important, but today it is a matter of major importance. Social affairs have precisely the same consequence and significance. Those who caution against adopting a patronizing attitude with regard to class levels are not talking merely about "manner." Manner is only the name for a very special kind of relationship, the effect of which is to drive people apart rather than bring them together. Manner generates unexpected reactions among those who are clients, although the patronizing of an individual is seldom if ever deliberate.

It is ironic that segregation in the United States today, after the passage of the antisegregation laws, is far more widespread than when segregation legally existed. One reason, of course, is that greater numbers of people are involved. The second and more important reason is that a subtle discriminatory system has come into existence. The practice of subtle discrimination is pervasive, and it is a more accurate indication of the attitudes of individuals than is the behavior of those who attempt to relate to members of minority groups. Let me state this in another way. At the present time, many people are inclined to question the propriety of the civil rights movement. Why, they ask, do Negroes feel it necessary to mount a civil rights program when they have already been emancipated from the traditional system? It is easy to reply that Negroes do this because they have tasted the fruits of freedom and want more, but this answer is in error. The explanation is very simple. White Americans believe that nonwhite Americans have achieved their victory and have established their positions as free, independent, and equal citizens. This is simply not so; it is a false idea and a few examples will suffice to prove its falseness.

For example, consider the Negroes' position in the large cities of the North in terms of residence. More Negroes live under conditions of residential segregation today than 20 years ago. This is true of every northern city--Chicago, San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, to name only a few. Negroes have moved into all the northern cities, but as they have moved in, the whites

have moved out to the peripheral suburban areas. This has created a new pattern of social relations whose distinguishing feature is greater segregation of whites from Negroes and Negroes from whites than ever before in our history. Twenty-five years ago, in Chicago, 50 percent of the nonwhites lived in communities in the city in which half the population was white. Today there are almost a million Negroes in Chicago, and 85 percent of them live in communities in which more than 90 percent of the population is nonwhite. A whole generation is living under much more segregated conditions than their forebears. This is illustrative of conditions throughout the country, and it refutes the widespread idea that progress has been made in which Negroes should take satisfaction.

With reference to the changing technology, automation has produced results very different from those generally assumed to be the case. It is a popular belief that Negroes have achieved new occupational opportunities and status. The truth is that unemployment among Negroes ranges from 12 to 20 percent in most communities; in some communities 50 percent of the nonwhites are unemployed. These figures are in sharp contrast to the national unemployment rate of 5 to 6 percent.

Since the end of World War II, the position of the Negroes with regard to employment has deteriorated rather than advanced. Negroes were employed during the war, often in upgraded positions, and they held jobs which they had never previously held. The end of the war and the subsequent development of automation (which has very special implications for blue-collar workers) resulted in pushing Negroes out of jobs and into the ranks of the unemployed. The Negro, therefore, is deeply concerned about employment, but the suburban whites who see Negro pickets in front of grocery stores and factories do not understand the reason for the concern. Negroes picket because they know that things are not as good as they are declared to be, but whites do not understand this fact and their failure to understand it means that they will communicate a gross misconception to a whole generation.

People who are solicitous about the welfare of Negroes know that the black-skinned child who wants to be President does not have a very good chance, and most of us think that it might be well for him to concentrate on a reasonable goal; we suggest to him that he should not aspire to middle-class activities since he will find it difficult, if not impossible, to enter into them. More frequently than we realize, our solicitousness adds fuel to the fire of his recognition of the discriminatory and segregated social system. The social service agencies remind him that he should not aspire to the impossible; in short, they give him the butt end of the stick. When we attempt to be friendly, kindly, and encouraging, we are often guilty of being patronizing, and in this way we may be the instrument of the social structure and organization in a far more pervasive and influential way than we realize. It is important for us to recognize this as a condition of our operation.

Still in terms of the behavioral sciences, I want to comment briefly on the war against poverty. It is indeed ironic that a society at the height of its affluence should find it necessary to mount a war on poverty. While we were getting rich, we tended to forget about the needs of the poor. In our society of today,

there are large groups of people who are not necessary for the maintenance of the affluent society. We are no longer dependent on the sweat and toil of many people in order to assure productivity. Why do we now focus on the marginal groups if they are not needed economically in an affluent society? We must concentrate our attention on them because the condition of their marginality has produced deprivation, and deprivation is a phenomenon which generates problems. The human animal, of course, attempts to find answers to problems. In this connection, we can make the same statement about the subculture we are concerned with; it, too, attempts to produce problem-solving answers in every situation of stress and trial. Correspondingly, the subculture which many of us see only as the evidence of a set of negative attributes to be ignored is to many individuals a solution of their life problems. It is their means of making life tolerable under the conditions of their deprivation. I am talking about something other than physical environment, about something other than the slums that we see as an environmental problem for many of our youngsters. I'm talking about the way in which people live their answers to the problem, respond to the lack of jobs, answer to their condition of deprivation forced upon them by the surrounding social structure. Their answers are the positive, organizing principles of their lives, and they bring their answers into the school, the playground, and the factory. In short, they bring their answers into the wider society which for the most part, in its present structuring of professions and services, is not prepared to recognize that answers have positive values.

We tend to tell them to assume our habits, culture, and attitudes and accept us on our conditions. This leaves them without any resources for working in the situations with which we confront them, and it makes failures of them; for we do not give them the rewards that are contingent upon their own learnings, and we do not recognize that they are indeed ingenious and problem-solving with reference to the world of deprivation from which they come. I think it is important to emphasize that material or psychological deprivation has the effect of generating problem-solving responses. When this happens simultaneously to a number of people, there is a residual piling-up of the problem-solving responses in the form of what we now call a subculture. This is the significance of the actions of a Negro school child who comes from a black ghetto. If he is combative, inattentive, if his schedule does not conform to the school schedule, I find it almost a certainty that a significant behavior pattern can be identified. His defiant attitude has a survival value, and his hostility is his answer to a problem situation.

My last point is certainly not new to the behavioral sciences. Many of us remember the day when John Dewey was a figure to be revered. I, for one, still regard him as such even though he has come under suspicion in some quarters. In Human Nature and Conduct, which I consider one of the classics of American behavioral sciences, Dewey observed that too many people believe that behavior can be changed by admonition or instruction or by a manipulation of symbols. It should be apparent to all of us that he is right and that we cannot change behavior by direct means. To believe that we can is to believe in magic. If we have created an influence which has produced a change in behavior, we have done so only because we have taken into consideration the objective conditions which obtain and which are the basis of the behavior. Only then can

we say that the change is attributable to our efforts and to the quality of our relationship. Any parole officer or probation officer knows how frustrating it is to try to influence, simply by personal relationships, the behavior of the person on parole or probation. The instruction he gives can become meaningful only when he sees that change must be brought about in the framework of job opportunities, community acceptance and rejection, and status relationships.

With these thoughts in mind, I want to comment on the specific ways in which deprived individuals are making evident to us a new and unique kind of collective experience. I have mentioned the revolution in the concept of civil rights, and it is important to see this as something more than a reassertion of the noble ideals of the Declaration of Independence or the eighteenth century rationalists. The concept is now worldwide, and it is a measuring stick by which the prospects and limitations of a community must be evaluated, whether that community be in Africa, Oakland, Richmond, or Los Angeles. The revolution in civil rights has entered into man's experience so deeply that even the highest political and governmental leaders cannot fail to take heed of representations made in its terms. It has created explosive changes, and it is important for us to give recognition to expressions made in its name, for such expressions reflect a power relationship which formerly did not exist.

The population explosion has subtle import for many of the deprived. I am not talking here of the concern about "standing room only" by the end of the century, nor am I talking about the expected enormous increase in population in California. The significance of the population explosion is that it has, at a highly accelerated rate, produced a shifting of the population and the development at a differential rate of age groups. These factors have created new pools of collective experience in terms of race and in terms of age that are unprecedented in the history of the country. The most obvious results of the population explosion are the increase in the absolute birth rate and the increase in the length of life. These are due to antibiotics, improved nutrition, and extended medical care. The numbers of the population at each end of the continuum are increasing rapidly each year. American society is becoming younger and older at one and the same time. This is the most important result of the population explosion because the increase in the number of young and old constitutes the basis of a new power configuration. If it is carried to its logical extreme, the young will be an isolated group, the old as well. Already the young and the old have created centers of power which are making bids for recognition and, indeed, for a decision-making function which they have never had in the past. All of us are familiar with recent events on the Berkeley campus, and I am quick to say that the manifestations of the free speech movement will not be disposed of merely by instituting a new set of temporarily acceptable rules. In my judgment, the fundamental question is whether we can face up here, or anywhere in American society, to the consequences of the emergence of the subculture of young people. The subculture of the young is a reflection, in purely biological terms, of the population explosion. It is also a result of the fact that the youth population has been put aside as we have lengthened its educational career and lessened its opportunities for participation and responsible activity in the wider society. It is a wonder that the youth subculture has developed as a result of its deprivation, of being denied access to the councils of society, and of its simultaneous discovery of its power and

its numbers. It is small wonder that the young have developed an adolescent subculture to deal with its psychological and material deprivation, chiefly among those youth who are most conspicuously deprived. In this sense, the middle-class child and the child from the slums are as one in their common experience with the adult world, for they are all in school and it is in the school that the adolescent subculture is most apparent.

We are, at the present time, making a study of this in Los Angeles, using a very large part of the school population as our sample. We have found that it is not only the teachers who do not know what goes on in the corridors or on the playground. The parents know even less about what their children are up to and what they are disciplined for. Youth is increasingly separated from parents and is attempting to solve its own problems without participating with adults in common standards, norms, and experiences.

There are new proportions in the age groups and new proportions in the racial and ethnic groups; there are new proportions of rural, urban, and suburban dwellers. All these new groups, with their new numbers, are so separated from each other that their problems must be solved as separate problems rather than as the problems of a common social body.

As a brief aside here, the increase in the birth rate has come to have a very special significance for those groups who live outside the circle of material advantage in the society. The city of Chicago reported recently that 53 percent of the students in public schools are Negro; in Chicago 29 percent of the total population is Negro. Philadelphia now reports that 67 percent of its school population is nonwhite and about 30 percent of its total population is nonwhite. In Washington, D.C., more than 85 percent of school children are nonwhite, and the total population is 60 percent nonwhite. Many other cities can report the same proportions.

My third point concerns the impact of automated technology. Today, as a result of automation, we need fewer and fewer people to produce more and more. Automation is a boon, but it is also a bane of our existence because increasing numbers of people are no longer needed. These people, however, are not drawn in equal numbers from all sections of the community, for automation affects chiefly the blue-collar workers--they are the people who are out of work. This is particularly true of the nonwhite community, whose rate of unemployment is greater than the rate of unemployment in the white community. When I call attention to this, I am also calling attention to the fact that a youngster in a family whose father is out of work finds that this experience is more important than anything else that is happening to him. In the past ten years, 40,000 packing house workers in Chicago have been put out of jobs by automation. Efforts have been made to retrain them, and the city of Chicago has been commended for developing a large number of taxi drivers. However, 40,000 taxi drivers are certainly not needed in Chicago, and reliable estimates from the research staff in the Illinois employment offices indicate that 17,000 of the 40,000 will never again be self-reliant or productive. These men, who are heads of families, will be permanently indigent. The behavior of the children in these families must be examined in the light of the collective framework of the situation; they cannot be regarded merely as individuals who

are in some ways maladjusted. All of these factors have caused the emergence of subcultures which are the condition of the behavior, the attitudes, and the point of view not of the individual alone but of the whole social framework from which he comes.

You are probably aware that two million white residents in the 12 largest cities in the country were replaced by two million nonwhite residents in the ten years between 1950 and 1960. In 1950, one of every ten children in school in these cities was known to suffer from cultural disability; i.e., from lack of capacity to move along at the same rate as the other children in the schools. At that time, the schools regarded this as a challenging new kind of collective problem. By 1960, one of every three children was found to be at such a disadvantage with reference to his background that he was doomed to fail. These children represented a situation that the schools could not adequately cope with. It is a situation that cannot be coped with by our traditional referral of maladjusted youngsters to the counselor's office for special treatment. It is a situation that cannot be managed in terms of an individual; it is a collective manifestation and a reflection of a collective framework which must be the condition of our operation. This is what I mean when I say it is our view that we must bring into question. Our view of these as individuals who can be treated as individuals is indeed suspect, and the replacement of this view with a more appropriate one is a greater challenge than finding a solution to the problems presented by the condition of an individual. If we find that the solution is not incorporated in the conventional curriculum procedures and methods of the school, then certainly we must examine the reasons why. Otherwise, we cannot engage the deprived youngsters with any prospect of success.

The term, "culturally deprived," has gained considerable currency recently, no doubt due to Frank Riessman and others who wrote a book entitled The Culturally Deprived. Riessman has been criticized for asserting that most groups to which youngsters belong necessarily lack a culture. I agree with those who regard this theory as invalid; in fact, my remarks today have dealt largely with the necessity of regarding members of subcultures as having a culture of their own. The term, "cultural deprivation," is valid only if we take it to mean that a youngster has not had an opportunity to acquire or to participate in the values of middle-class culture. But it does not follow that he does not have a set of positive values which are indeed aspects of culture even though they are not derived from the culture of the middle-class. I have said before, and I repeat, that the values of such a child are derived from his experience in forging answers to his deprivation. These youngsters represent something more than a personification of a physical and environmental situation. They have been shaped by the necessity of facing their situations, and they bring to us ways of behaving, relating, and responding produced by necessity.

In my opinion, the main task of the American educational system lies in identifying the subcultures and recognizing them for what they are. Perhaps I can best express this problem by commenting briefly on the dilemma of young people in general, for the problems of Negroes, Mexican-Americans, and the impoverished are not unlike the problems of all youth today. Most thoughtful students of the problems of young people assess their difficulties in terms of changing social and economic conditions. Certainly it is true that

socioeconomic factors may make it difficult or impossible for the young to attain the chief hope of every self-sustaining individual: the derivation of personal satisfaction from work satisfaction. People must find a place in society, and this is the question which confronts every child. As Paul Goodman has said, "It's hard to grow up in a world where there isn't enough men's work." Goodman further noted that men have always done drudging work in order to produce necessary food and shelter, secure in the idea that it was justified and worthy of a man to do it, although sometimes feeling that the social conditions under which the work was performed were not worthy of a man. This is not the whole of the problem, however. Material security is important, but, under normal conditions, greater security is derived from knowing that your contribution is useful and uniquely yours--that you are needed.

These remarks are more than truisms. They indicate a fundamental problem, for every child wants to know and needs to know whether he can make a useful and valuable contribution. Often he is afraid that he cannot be useful and that he will not be wanted as a person. This is one of the questions that confronts us in the public school system, for whole masses of the children see themselves as apart from the "others" in precisely these terms.

In the United States, the adults of earlier generations needed youth because often the very life of the family--the bread on the table or the coal in the kitchen stove--depended on their making a contribution by doing chores. The word "chore" has lost its former meaning: 50 years ago performing a chore meant filling a responsible role. Today a chore is regarded as an irksome invasion of childish freedom.

In many foreign countries today, youths have specific roles to play in society and are regarded by their elders as successors to the roles of the elders. The elders know that only the young can carry on the task of shaping and building a new and better society. In many of the emerging nations of Asia and Africa, only youth is free from ancient tribal custom and only youth can lead society from tribal confusion and anarchy toward lasting economic independence in a unifying democracy. When adults and young people recognize the need for each other, there is less tension, less estrangement of the generations. The generations need each other, not alone for the economic survival of the society but for the maintenance of its very integrity as a moral order. Without such mutual recognition, there is no sense of being needed; without the sense of being needed, there is no corresponding commitment by the younger generation to the maintenance of society.

It is a sad fact that in the United States the older generation, for economic and technological reasons, no longer needs the younger generation. To a great extent youth has become an economic liability rather than an economic asset. A child represents an income tax deduction, but this by no means makes up the difference. The prolongation of childhood, the child labor laws, the effect of automated technology, the cost of bringing up and educating youth for possibly 15 to 20 years--these are the economic grounds which have caused the mutuality of the generations to disappear in recent years. The economic obligations and responsibilities, the rewards, and particularly the power relations between young and old are merely shadows of the past. The powers and responsibilities of the generations today are tenuous and unclear.

The same factors which are threatening youth's sense of importance and meaningfulness and its sense of being needed are also threatening many adults. Automation is threatening all too many able-bodied men with a future of chronic indigence or insecurity, and this affects both the generations. An adult, insecure as a worker, cannot be secure as a parent; his insecurity as a parent is certain to be visited as a secondary and confirming deprivation upon his children who are already suffering from the lack of meaning and purpose in life, and thus, the process comes full circle. It is at this point that the awesome negative impact of a generation of deprived and alienated youths becomes apparent. Many youths see themselves as the avenging angels of their parents, since they hold the power to prove their parents' success or failure as parents. Young people in a society that no longer depends on them for economic survival are tempted to use the power conferred upon them by the reversal between generations to act as the accuser and the judge of their parents. In this regard, the whole society stands accused to a certain extent. We are all in loco parentis as we witness the ubiquitous pattern of rebelliousness of present-day youth which is manifest in a plurality of deviant patterns ranging from one end of the spectrum to the other.

We are becoming aware of the existence of a plurality of subcultures produced by the problem-solving tendency of human groups when confronted with specific and recurrent problems. These subcultures are a reflection of both the broadly encompassing and the narrowly specific changes in the socioeconomic system which confronts young people in general--and young people who are members of different cultural, economic, and racial groups in particular. Leaders of the society also have begun to recognize that poverty is a factor which must be dealt with, for the subcultures, as collective entities, have a power potential which they are beginning to express in the streets and in the elections.

I have attempted in my remarks today to call attention to the changes in the social order which are structuring the new collectivities. I have pointed out that we have so far failed to engage the new collectivities except through the agency of the individual who comes from them. When we engage such individuals, we tend to separate them from their experiences, to ignore their experiences, or to regard them as valueless. In my judgment, the degree to which we do this is the measure of our failure to affect such persons. Instead of producing a desirable effect, we generate, through our patronizing attitude, a hostility which can prove a serious threat to the workings of the democratic society. We can effectively engage the members of subcultures only after close reexamination of the problem and a reconstruction of our view.